

CAN WE TALK?

Celebrity impersonator Dee Dee Hanson finds herself center stage as comedy queen Joan Rivers.

WORDS BY kelly ritze

Impatiently Dee Dee Hanson types away on her keyboard while talking on a telephone which is cradled by her left shoulder.

Her honey-blond hair is piled on top of her head and fastened with an elastic band. A white terry cotton robe from the Ritz Carlton is neatly tied at her waist.

"I've got to FedEx a press kit overnight," Hanson says to Maureen Dobson, event coordinator of Hanson Productions.

It is 1:25 p.m. on a Friday in the busy life of a Joan Rivers impersonator.

"I can't believe that I do this as a job, actually," Hanson says.

Impersonating Rivers has evolved into a full time career over the past 10 years for Dee Dee, who has traveled from Hawaii to Jamaica to star as Joan's clone at corporate and private events. The job pays so well that she and her husband, a high school teacher, live comfortably in a beautiful five-bedroom home in Orange.

"Tonight I'm doing a thing for Ford," explains Hanson. "Corporate events are my specialty."

Hanson walks from her home office into the connecting master bathroom to prepare for the evening. She seats herself atop a mauve chair and looks at the daunting collection of Mac, Estée Lauder, Lancôme and Chanel makeup spread across her mirrored vanity. She needs about two hours to transform herself into a replica of Rivers.

"I paint the Joan on my canvas," jokes Hanson as she applies liquid foundation with a



photo courtesy of DEE DEE HANSON

Working as a Joan Rivers impersonator has evolved into a full-time career for Dee Dee Hanson, who travels from Las Vegas to Jamaica to star as Joan's clone.